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**VENEZUELA: PEREZ ADDRESS
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<NEWS TICKER>

Analyst: Date: 02/07/92 Time: 22:37:30

Distributed to:

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FBIS 021FEB08

UNCLAS 6T

Venezuela: Perez Address on National Unity (Take 1 of 3)

PA0802024192 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish
1616 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Speech by Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez in the
Ayacucho Room at Miraflores Palace in Caracas -- live]

[Text] Mr. Chairman of the OAS Permanent Council, Mr. OAS Secretary General: On behalf of the Venezuelan Government and people, I wish to state our heartfelt gratitude for this historical gesture from the OAS, represented in its highest organization, its Permanent Council, which decided to send its chairman and secretary general to Venezuela to personally express the solidarity of all the people on the American Continent and their governments with the Venezuelan Government and people, following the unfortunate incident our homeland experienced. That support was expressed in a document stating the definite and categorical determination of all the nations on our continent to express their solidarity with democracy and to counter any attempt or plot against the American people's sovereignty and their legitimately appointed governments.

We welcome you in a ceremony which includes the participation of all those who represent the highest officials in the Venezuelan state and the leading groups in the nation: The president and vice president of the Venezuelan Congress, former presidents of our country, the president and members of the Supreme Court of Justice, the secretaries generals and other distinguished leaders of the Venezuelan political parties represented in our National Congress, the attorney general of the Republic, the president of the Supreme Electoral Council, the president of the Judiciary Council, the president of the comptrollership general of the Republic, the presidents and representatives of the Confederation of Venezuelan Workers [CTV], the Venezuelan Federation of Associations and Chambers of Commerce and Industry [Fedecamaras], representatives of the leading groups in our country's activities, and the directors of the main news media.

In sum, this....[Perez interrupted by unidentified speaker, who says softly His Eminence the cardinal, the highest representative of the Catholic Church] In sum, the Ayacucho Room in Miraflores Palace includes the broadest and most appropriate representation of the Venezuelan nation -- the government and its executive cabinet; the military high command, led by the defense minister; officers, generals, admirals, commanders, and subordinates who lead the Venezuelan Armed Forces' activities. We also have here members of the opposition, critics of the public administration, as well as leaders of the opposition parties. We have a full representation of our nation and we proudly proclaim to the world and to you, Messrs.

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UNCLAS 6T

Venezuela: Perez Address on National Unity (Take 2 of 3--
021Feb08)

///without political confrontations.

PA0802024392

[Text] Even in those issues on which the controversy is focused, we also can respond to the world by expressing our gratitude for the solidarity expressed with Venezuela, establishing rules for the controversy and debate. These rules lead us to believe that many times in the excitement of discussion or in the stubbornness of controversy, we can contribute unknowingly to laying the foundations for some people to think that there are grounds for launching adventurous actions to consummate power ambitions, as we experienced on that terrible morning of 4 February in Venezuela.

Here we are dealing not with a movement that had rightful claims or people subjugated by tyranny, unable to freely express their views, form political parties, or discuss the problems of the country. This was a rebellion motivated not only by ambition, but also by an antidemocratic ideology, which, although this term has been repeated many times, can be defined clearly as a fascist ideology. When the terms of the manifesto that the rebels were going to deliver to the nation after seizing power in a treacherous manner are known, you will learn that they disavowed the existence and significance of the political parties, they condemned the democratic system, and they spoke about a new way of governing; namely, fascism or totalitarianism, a violent and arbitrary imposition on the country.

This is what Venezuelans now should think about and reflect upon.

Friends and adversaries of the government have joined their effort, because democracy is shared by all Venezuelans. Had this rebellion succeeded, our fatherland would have experienced atrocious times.

We would have lost everything, except the international solidarity and the action of the OAS, under the commitment of Santiago de Chile. This also would have caused problems for our people, which our people would have withstood, because it would have been a matter of restoring democracy to our fatherland.

But in these brief statements I have not mentioned a great institution, as I left this for the end of my speech. I am referring to the Venezuelan Armed Forces. Venezuelans had proclaimed proudly that, after experiencing long dictatorships in our fatherland, we had developed an exemplary harmony between

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UNCLAS 6T

Venezuela: Perez Address on National Unity (Take 3 of 3--
021Feb08)

///crush Venezuelan democracy.

PA0802024592

[Text] This is....[Perez changes thought] Representatives of the OAS; diplomatic representatives of American countries; Papal Nuncio, who represents the diplomatic corps accredited in Venezuela, at this time we want to reiterate before our country and through the television cameras that we appreciate your enthusiastic gesture of support for Venezuelan democracy. We know we are not alone. We know that Venezuelan democracy is defended not only by the people's willingness to live in democracy. We must not forget that democracies have sprung up throughout our continent. Unfortunately, we permitted a dictatorship to come to power in the smallest Latin American country, in Haiti.

Here with us is Haitian President Aristide. When we in Venezuela endorsed the reinstatement of the Haitian Government, because nonintervention cannot be used to favor dictators but to respect the people's will, we did not believe that our defense of Haitian democracy would later become an important factor for Venezuela. We did not know that our country would be the next victim of totalitarian treason. We were lucky enough to observe the maturity of our people -- which has not been accomplished in that unlucky and brotherly Haitian fatherland -- which allowed us to defeat treason in only a few hours. This tells us that the decision made in Santiago, Chile, to empower the OAS to prevent the will of our people from being violated is a necessity for all our fatherlands.

Now more than ever, we are able to understand our energetic position on Haiti. We are able to understand not only our solidarity with that nation, prompted by our democratic creed and participation in the OAS, but also the defense of our own democracies. Now we are lucky enough to tell the world with pride that our country has returned to normalcy, that the activities of our people normalized after only a few hours of interruption, and that our nation believes in democracy, struggles for democracy, and never will live under a dictatorship. Our nation believes and shares the idea that we must defend democracy together. Now more than ever, after the disappearance of the heinous threat of nuclear holocaust following the end of the East-West confrontation, the OAS and other regional security organizations in the world should be strengthened, as I stated at the summit of the UN Security Council.

These are the conclusions we must draw from the dramatic lesson

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